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AUTHOR	Condon, E. C.
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ABSTRACT

Bilingual education is defined here as instruction in two languages, one of which is English as a second language, and the other the native language of the pupils. Bilingual education is also noted to include a cultural component whereby students are taught about the history and culture of their own civilization as well as those of their adopted country -- the U.S. Among the topics discussed are: the status of bilingual education in the world; the need for bilingual education in the U.S., the official status of bilingual education in the U.S. (financial aid and legal support); target audience of bilingual education in the U.S.; the aims of bilingual education; approaches to bilingual education (maintenance vs. transitional programs); instructional staff in bilingual education; bilingual instruction in subject matter other than language; format and content of lessons; the role of ESL in bilingual education; an example of a lesson integrating ESL with science in bilingual education; history and culture in bilingual education; teacher preparation (language, culture, history, and professional preparation); instructional materials; evaluation in bilingual education; and misinformation and problems in bilingual education (what bilingual education is not, unconscious factors that undermine bilingual education, and negative effects of bilingual education that are provided by federal funding). An appendix includes a socioeconomic profile of New Jersey's Puerto Ricans. (Author/AM)

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BILINGUAL EDUCATION IN THE UNITED STATES

IRES Institute, Rutgers University
Dr. E. C. Condon, Director

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IRES Institute
Rutgers Graduate School
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1975

"Today, bilingualism represents a definite asset for an individual both in the realm of public life--career opportunities, travel--and in the area of personal development--expanded intellectual faculties, enrichment of personality."
-Jerome Bruner

Bilingual Education in the World

Bilingual education has been in existence for many decades in various parts of the world, where two official languages are recognized within a country (such as Belgium, or Canada), where two or more idioms are used by different groups within a single geographical entity (such as India, or China) or where English has become a lingua franca for developing nations in their struggle for technological development (such as Nigeria, or Sierra Leone).

In the United States, however, bilingual instruction represents a fairly recent innovation which may be said to have arisen from a growing concern on the part of society for the difficulties experienced by non-English and partial bilingual speakers in attempting to function effectively within the educational, social and economic environments of a dominant middle class, English-speaking community. The lack of equal opportunity afforded to minority groups in our society is well-known to educators, and its extent sufficiently illustrated in government statistics on educational, employment,

and income trends related to ethnic background to preclude the necessity of reviewing these facts within the present document. Suffice it to say that, in the state of New Jersey alone for instance, the drop-out rate of Puerto Rican children is four times that of other youngsters, 68% of Puerto Rican adults work in low income jobs (unskilled labor) or approximately three times the percentage of white workers, and the median family income for Puerto Ricans is 44% lower than that of Anglo families.[1] Similar figures are available for all minority groups within, as well as without the New Jersey area. All of them lead to the inevitable conclusion that American schools have not succeeded in meeting the needs of a certain portion of our population which may be called "a-typical"--i.e. steeped in a cultural tradition and a communication system divergent from those of the dominant middle-class community exemplified in the educational system.

The extent of national concerns for an equalization of educational opportunities for all school children may be estimated from the ready availability of federal funding in support of bilingual bicultural programs at the elementary and secondary levels during the last decade (HEW, Title I, Title III, and Title VII ESEA funds, for instance).

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[1] Socio-Economic Profile of N.J.'s Puerto Ricans, Hector S. Rodriguez, Puerto Rican Congress of New Jersey, Inc., Trenton, N.J. 1970.

In addition, some of the states have enacted legislation mandating Bilingual Education. At present, these are Massachusetts, Texas, Illinois and New Jersey.

The basic assumption which motivated the passage of such law in the above states is that such a measure would eliminate the waste of brainpower represented by the academic failure and drop-out rate of partial bilinguals and, at the same time, reduce the long-range cumulative costs of grade retention rehabilitation and welfare for these youngsters.

The Need for Bilingual Education in the United States

The label of "a nation of immigrants" is justifiable applied to the United States, a country where a continuous stream of aliens are welcomed into the native-born population at an increasing annual rate, now reaching some five and a half million people (as opposed to three and a half million in 1968).[1]

Most of the foreign-born individuals who enter this country have limited English-speaking abilities. At the present time, one of the largest groups of residents in the U.S.A. whose native tongue is other than English, consists of Spanish speakers--aproximately nine million people at the present time--whose educational, occupational, and economic statuses fall far below those of other groups.[2] As far as the state of New Jersey is concerned, the total population of 7,168,143 individuals includes approximately two million people of various linguistic backgrounds, among whom over 600,000 were born in another country, and 250,000 are Spanish speakers.[3]

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[1]Table IV, U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Services, 1972 Annual Report.

[2]The Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce, March 1972 Population Report Tables 88-95

[3]N.J. Office of Statistics, 1971-72 Statistics on Ethnic Groups.

The extent to which individuals with limited English skills are deprived of equal opportunities (academic, social, and economic) is exemplified in Appendix A, which describes the demographic characteristics of Puerto Ricans in New Jersey.[1] These local statistics are substantiated on a nation-wide basis by those recorded in the Congressional Hearings which led to the establishment of Title VII, ESEA, for the support of Bilingual Education.

The consistently negative outcomes associated with linguistic inadequacies in the context of American schools are ample justification for the institution of bilingual education as an instructional alternative for youngsters who are unabel to function effectively in regular classes taught in a language other than their native idiom and who are, consequently, deprived of an equal right to learn.

A Definition of Bilingual Education

Basically, bilingual education consists of instruction in two languages, one of which is English as a Second Language, and the other is the native language of the pupils. It also includes a cultural component whereby students are taught about the history and culture of their own civilization, as well as those of their adopted country--the U.S.A.

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[1]Hector S. Rodriguez, "Socio-Economic Profile of N.J.'s Puerto Ricans," Puerto Rican Congress of N.J., Inc., 1972.

The Official Status of Bilingual Education in the United States

1. Financial Aid. Bilingual education received official governmental recognition with the enactment of the Bilingual Education Act of 1968--Title VII ESEA, and the subsequent yearly appropriation of funds to support it. In addition to the financial resources provided by Title VII ESEA, other funds have also been made available to the schools for the implementation of bilingual instruction through the following federal programs:

a. Title I, Elementary and Secondary Education Act

b. Title III, Elementary and Secondary Education Act

c. Title IX, Ethnic Heritage Program, ESEA

d. Education Professions Development Act (now under National Center for Improvement of Educational Systems)

e. Economic Opportunity Act--Headstart and Follow Through Programs

f. Indian Education Act

2. Legal Support. Up to the present, the position of federal courts on the constitutionality of mandatory bilingual education appears undecided despite various appeals based upon the 14th Amendment (Due Process and Equal Protection Clauses), the Civil Rights Act (Title VI), and the 1st Amendment (Guarantee of Free Speech).

Under the circumstances, it would seem that the burden of equalizing learning opportunities for children with limited English ability is to be delegated to state legislatures. Yet, following the lead of Massachusetts which passed a Transitional Bilingual Act in 1971, only 3 states (Illinois, New Jersey, and Texas) have mandated bilingual education in this country, others such as California, New Mexico, Washington and Pennsylvania have enacted legislation in support of some form of bilingual education.

From an overall standpoint, however, the official outlook on bilingual education seems nebulous at the present time. And, a realistic estimate of its impact upon federal and state agencies would rate it as far below that created by the segregation issue, despite the essential similarity of their goal--the guarantee of equal opportunity and participation in the life of the American community for all individuals, regardless of their background.

The Target Audience of Bilingual Education in the U.S.A.

The advantages of bilingualism and biculturalism in the twentieth-century world of international (and, who knows, perhaps imminent interstellar) travel and accelerated changes are self-evident. This, the opportunity to acquire two languages and alternate patterns of thought, attitude and behavior should be considered a definite asset and should be offered to all school children.

Practically speaking, however, the inclusion of all pupils in bilingual education classes is not feasible at the present time for a variety of reasons, ranging from budgetary and scheduling problems to identification of qualified personnel.

Federally funded programs (Title I, VII and others) do permit the participation of English speakers, usually on a volunteer basis. On the other hand, enrollment in such programs is compulsory for children with limited English ability. Such an arrangement , thus, succeeds in meeting the linguistic needs of non-English and partial bilingual speakers without depriving other children of the right to take advantage of an educational innovation if they so desire.

For the purpose of clarification, definitions of terms commonly used in bilingual education are listed below:

Bilingual Learner: a child who speaks two languages, though not necessarily with equal proficiency. The native language may be English, or another language.

Bilingual Teacher: a teacher who speaks two languages, though not necessarily with equal proficiency. The native language may be English, or another language.

Bilingual Program: a program of instruction which utilizes two languages--English and the native idiom of the students.

Bilingualism: the ability to function in two languages, though not necessarily with equal proficiency.

Biculturalism: the ability to function in two cultures, though not necessarily with equal proficiency.

Balanced Bilingualism: the ability to function equally effectively in two languages.

Balanced Biculturalism: the ability to function equally effectively in two cultures.

The Aims of Bilingual Education

In its ideal form, the purpose of bilingual education is to produce balanced bilingualism-biculturalism within the learners, that is to say, the ability to function equally well in two linguistic and cultural contexts (American and native). However within the United States today, the practical overall aim of this educational innovation is to equalize learning opportunities for non-English and partial bilingual speakers. On a more specific basis major objectives may be stated as follows:

1. To enable children to achieve fluency and literacy in both languages.

2. To enable children to function in both cultures (American and native).

3. To enable children to progress in academic subjects at the same rate as other children.

4. To enable children to develop a positive self-concept and pride in their dual linguistic and cultural heritages.

An extension of bilingual education concerns for children of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds reaches their parents as well, for most existing programs emphasize strongly community participation in the planning, development, and evaluation of instructional activities. This particular component in bilingual education serves the practical purpose of providing common grounds of understanding between native and non-native members of the community, by enabling them to compare educational concerns and to exchange views on the general, as well as specialized, needs of all children within the school system.

From the standpoint of public school interests and responsibilities, bilingual education includes basically the same goals as those stated for a regular educational sequence; its only departure from the common program is that it seeks to achieve similar aims through different means. At the same time, a significant implication of bilingual education, on a national basis, is that it fosters cultural pluralism in a multi-ethnic society, through maintenance of the language-culture heritages of various groups--a concept

which is consistent with the democratic principle of choice, central to the American way of life--rather than cultural conformity and compulsory Americanization-principles now rejected in a free society, and associated with the myth of the "melting pot" tradition.

Approaches to Bilingual Education

There are two ways of interpreting bilingual instruction in the context of public school education: as a self-sustained, continuous program ("maintenance" bilingual education), or as a temporary measure to ease the transfer of non-English or bilingual speakers into the regular school curriculum ("transitional" bilingual education).

1. A "maintenance" program of bilingual education is a total sequence of bilingual learning from the pre-school to the adult education levels, in which parallel subject matter offerings, given in the native and other language, are made available to all individuals in educational institutions at all levels.
2. A "Transitional" program of bilingual education is a limited sequence of bilingual learning at any designated instructional level, whereby the students are offered intensive training in English as a Second Language while receiving subject matter instruction in their native language, until such time as they are deemed able to function adequately in a normal classroom situation.

The most prevalent philosophy of bilingual education implemented in programs throughout the United States, is the second one described in the previous paragraph--transitional bilingual education. Its popularity is dictated by purely pragmatic reasons, such as local policy, community wishes, or problems in scheduling materials acquisition, and qualified personnel selection.

Instructional Staff in Bilingual Education

Bilingual instruction may be organized in several ways, each of which has proved to be equally effective in response to local conditions. Among several variations in staff deployment, four major categories may be readily identified:

1. One Class - One Teacher

   The teacher is a balanced bilingual-bicultural individual: he is, therefore, able to teach in either language. He is trained in native and second language methodologies.

   The class may consist of all non-English or partial bilingual speakers; or may include up to 50% English speaking students.

2. Two Classes - Two Teachers (as a team)

   The teaching team includes an English-dominant teacher (the English as a Second Language specialist) and an Other-Language-dominant teacher (the native language specialist). Each teacher spends half of his time with each class, and teaches strictly in his native language. Both are trained in language methodology. (The ESL specialist is not necessarily required to know the language spoken by the children.)

   The composition of both classes may be the same as the one described above: mixed or bilingual. Another possibility is to match one bilingual class with one English-speaking class.

3. One Class - One Teacher and a Part-time Specialist

The teacher is dominant in the language spoken by the children, and provides only native language instruction. Time is set aside once or twice during the day for English as a Second Language instruction (15 minutes to two hours daily, according to the age of the pupils) which is handled by the ESL specialist (English-dominant, or simply native speaker of English without knowledge of another language). Both are trained in language methodology.

The class usually consists of non-English or partial bilingual speakers.

4. One Class - One Teacher and One Aide

The teacher is dominant in one language, and the aide in the other; both are trained in language methodology. The teacher is responsible for the planning of instruction in both languages, and for its implementation in the classroom through teaching, and through supervision of work assigned to the aide.

In all cases, the children are not entirely segregated from the rest of the pupils, with whom they mingle for various, less verbal or abstract activities, such as art, music, home economics, industrial arts, physical education, lunch and recreation. Quite often also, mathematics is set aside for "mixed" instruction in English, on the assumption that the nearly universal nature of mathematics symbols will enable pupils with limited English ability to follow instruction adequately.

Bilingual Instruction in Subject Matter Other Than Language Arts

Language Arts instruction is bilingual; the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing are taught in both the native and English as a Second Languages. The latter is taught by means of second language techniques.

Other subject matters may be taught in either language or in both, in accordance with instructional decisions made at the local level. The decision to teach a particular topic in a specific idiom is usually made on the basis of common sense, and takes into consideration both the nature of the subject matter and the children's proficiency in each language. For example:

"Social Studies" is preferably taught in the native language, in view of its highly verbal and abstract content.

"Mathematics" is often taught in English, in view of the commonality of its code to both languages and the concreteness of its contents.

"History and Culture" is usually taught bilingually, since it is based upon a contrast of two ethnic heritages and two ways of living.

Another source of variations in the realm of bilingual education may be found in the amount of time assigned to learning in each language. The proportion of instruction in one idiom as opposed to the other may range from 5% up to 50% of the total time. Furthermore, this proportion may be modified in the course of the year, as the students become increasingly more proficient in English as a Second Language.

Bilingual Instruction - Format and Content of Lessons

The format of bilingual instruction tends to vary from one program to another, in accordance with local preference and conditions. At the present time, research findings are insufficient to indicate which type of bilingual learning is most likely to maximize academic achievement. Three of the most common

instructional combinations are as follows:

1. Teaching separate lessons, with different contents, in each language.

2. Teaching the same contents in each language, at different times of the day.

3. Teaching in both languages concurrently. This does not mean instruction through translation, but rather instruction of a brief thought unit in one language, followed by its enrichment and reinforcement in the second language, and culminating in its verification by means of both languages (during which time, each student is expected to reply in the language in which the question has been asked).

   In the event that an abstract concept cannot be grasped easily by the pupils in the second language, the native idiom is also used to clarify the problem and to eliminate time wasting demonstrations.

In a general manner, the content of bilingual instruction matches that of regular classes at the appropriate grade level. Specifically speaking, however, the range and sequencing of curriculum items must be somewhat modified to meet the specialized needs of students who are taught in two languages. These necessary changes affect the following areas:

1. Vocabulary Range and Sequence:

   a. English Vocabulary: Words are selected on the basis of usefulness and high frequency in oral communication.

      Vocabulary sequencing is determined by the degree of concreteness, simplicity, and regularity of the items.

   b. Native Language Vocabulary: Words are selected on the basis of children's experiences, as well as their proficiency level.

2. Grammatical Structures: They are subject (in both languages) to the same restrictions as those applied to vocabulary learning.

3. Pronunciation: In both languages, interference items are stressed particularly to eliminate traces of a "foreign accent."

4. Oral and Written Skills: All four skills are taught in both languages but, in the case of English as a Second Language, they are taught in the invariable sequence of listening, speaking, reading and writing (each successive skill, thus, reinforcing the preceding one).

5. Evaluation: Due to the nature of bilingual instruction, evaluation requires special attention. Testing recommendations are described in a later paragraph.

The Role of ESL in Bilingual Education

English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction is NOT synonymous to bilingual instruction; but it is an integral and very important component of the latter, since every individual in this country must eventually be able to function primarily in an English-speaking community, not only academically but socially and economically as well. ESL is a highly specialized subject matter which requires skilled handling; it cannot be taught by a regular elementary school or English high school teacher without appropriate training. Its aim is to teach "total communication" in English--a command of oral and written skills, as well as all nonverbal auxiliary skills (thought, action and reaction patterns, gestures and vocal markers)--

in order to enable the learners to function effectively and automatically in American society.

Within the structure of bilingual education, the role of ESL instruction is to provide the pupils with a solid ground in standard English skills by utilizing and expanding the content of subject matter taught in the native language or bilingually and supplementing it with concepts included in the regular Language Arts program. The achievement of such a goal, thus, presupposes a careful selection and organization of all instructional activities, as well as team planning, in order to insure the coordination and proper reinforcement of all learning experiences. An example of a lesson integrating ESL with science in bilingual education would be as follows:

Science Topic: The Water Cycle

Step 1: Native Language Medium
The new concepts are taught initially in the native language, and the lesson is taught out of a textbook by the bilingual teacher.

Step 2: Second Language Medium (ESL)
The ESL specialist prepares a controlled narrative (restricted vocabulary and grammatical structures) in English and duplicates it for the students. He teaches the lesson, using second language techniques.

Step 3: Bilingual Activity
Verification and reinforcement of learning through questions and answers (oral and written) in both languages, with the stipulation that each answer must be given in the same language as that of the question.

Since ESL specialists cannot be expected to develop all of the materials required for their classes, they usually select one of the many linguistically sequenced readers available on the market today to serve them as a guide in the planning of ESL activities. These texts are, then, used as frameworks of language reference into which concepts included in the regular readers may be integrated in a manner consistent with the principles of second language teaching.

History and Culture in Bilingual Education

Language cannot be taught in a vacuum. Bilingual instruction, therefore, includes a "history and culture" component intended to prevent the alienation of the learners from the mainstream of American life, by teaching them how to function effectively in different cultural situations, and by fostering within them a positive self-concept associated with their own ethnic heritage.

This component includes two major types of activities: first, social studies instruction on both the histories of the United States and the native country of the pupils; and second, cultural instruction on comparisons and contrasts between the American and the native life styles and value systems. While the former data is taught in a formal manner, the latter is presented as a combination of theoretical information, reinforced with practical exercises which are designed to teach the students the skills of matching appropriate behavioral sequences(thought-attitude-speech-action) with selected situations. In this manner, the learners are exposed to both the historical and the everyday perspectives of life in

to enter certified degree programs in local colleges and universities. As a matter of fact, in view of the current downward trend in the employment statistics of the teaching profession, the present staffing shortage in bilingual education is not likely to endure. By creating new demands for specialized personnel, this educational innovation now offers new avenues of employment to foreign language teachers, whose positions are being threatened by steadily decreasing enrollments in the schools. Thus, its advent may not only result in anticipated educational benefits to linguistically disadvantaged students, but also in unexpected teaching opportunities for job-seeking certified instructors. (See Appendix B for statistics on Foreign Language Teacher Employment in New Jersey).

The ideal bilingual teacher is, of course, an individual who possesses balanced knowledges and skills in two languages and cultural contexts (English and the native language of the students) and who has completed a bilingual-bicultural training program leading to certification or endorsement. Unfortunately, such highly qualified instructors are not always readily available, and bilingual positions are often filled by others who are dominant in one or the other language. In the latter case, an equally effective system of instruction may be achieved by forming a teaching team of two specialists--one for ESL, and one for the other language. And, as common sense dictates, each language is taught

by the native-speaking member of the team. As a last alternative, and wherever scheduling or budget does not permit team teaching or additional staffing, the regular classroom teacher is trained to become an ESL specialist, and his work is complemented by a visiting native language specialist.

Teacher Preparation in Bilingual Education

One of the many misconceptions attendant upon bilingual education is that a bilingual speaker who holds any kind of teacher certification is *a priori* qualified to handle a bilingual class. Nothing could be more erroneous, and the results of such indiscriminate bilingual practices may be as disastrous as those incurred by the hiring of a Frenchman (with an emergency certificate), for instance, to teach his native language, on the assumption that his undeniable language proficiency will offset his professional deficiency in educational techniques.

In any program where one or more languages happen to be the media, as well as the subject matter of instruction, both pre - and in-service training are of primary importance. This principle has, in fact, been officially endorsed by the office of Education Title VII administrators who now include a mandatory teacher preparation component in funded bilingual programs.

Regardless of the type of program implemented by a school system, the cardinal rules for staffing requirements (in addition to bilingual-bicultural proficiency) are: 1) selection based upon evidence of specialized training; 2) pre-service orientation

to define the role and objectives of bilingual education, and its relationship to the total curriculum; and 3) in-service workshops throughout the academic year to facilitate planning, materials development or adaptation, and evaluation.

Basic teacher preparation in bilingual education includes the following:

1. Language Preparation

   Native or near-native proficiency in the language or languages to be taught (English and/or the other language) in all four skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing).

   Knowledge of the nature of the native and second languages (standard form), in terms of:
   - a. Melody of connected speech.
   - b. Grammatical signals of meaning (not traditional, but functional grammar).
   - c. High frequency vocabulary
   - d. Language auxiliaries (gestures and vocal markers).

   Knowledge of interference points between standard English and the other language in all four skills.

2. Culture-History Preparation

   Awareness of cultural differences and of their influences on human interactions.

   Knowledge of American history, that of the other country, and the relationships existing between them (comparisons, contrasts, and mutual influences).

   Native or near-native knowledges and skills in the cultural contexts of the language or languages to be taught (American and the other culture), in terms of:

a. Overall cultural orientations (the average man).
b. National characteristics.
c. Total communication (language and other media in cultural context).
d. Patterns of human behavior related to basic needs.

Knowledge of interference points between both cultures in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains.

3. Professional Preparation

Knowledge and supervised practice of contextual native language and second language teaching techniques.

Experience in bilingual-bicultural curriculum planning, materials development and adaptation.

Familiarity with existing bilingual evaluation programs--their strengths, weaknesses, and applicability to the local situation.

Knowledge of the psychology of intercultural relations, as it applies to the schools, minority groups, and the community at large.

Instructional Materials in Bilingual Education

There are two crucial problems associated with the selection and use of bilingual materials at all educational levels (pre-kindergarten - adult):

1. In view of the recency of bilingual educational concerns in this country, the choice of parallel bilingual materials is still considerably restricted. In addition, those few books which are now offered on the market tend to be ineffective, for they rely strictly upon literal translations which overlook differences in stylistics, concepts and logic associated with each language and culture.

2. The Inadequacy of Monolingual Texts. Since the purpose of bilingual education is to insure that bilingual children learn the academic content of the regular school curriculum along with two linguistic media of expression, the usefulness of monolingual subject matter texts, in English and other languages (published in the U.S.A. and elsewhere) is rather limited in bilingual education, without extensive adaptation.

Evaluation in Bilingual Education

Testing represents another major area of difficulty in bilingual programs which are, by nature, oriented toward both humanistic and behavioristic objectives. While it is possible to measure objectively certain types of bilingual-bicultural behaviors (pronunciation accuracy, vocabulary and grammatical knowledge, fluency of bilingual-bicultural response, use of gestures, language dominance, cultural knowledge, and the like), it is quite difficult to assess such elusive factors as changes in attitudes, perceptions, self-concepts or understandings which are not open to direct investigation but must be evaluated through inferences and personal judgement. Thus testing, in bilingual education must be rated at best as presently inadequate in terms of currently acceptable standards of accountability, since existing tools of measurement lean heavily toward the measurement of cognitive aspects of bilingual learning, while mostly neglecting its affective and psychomotor factors.

Additional obstacles to the appropriate assessment of bilingual achievement may be found in the cultural irrelevance of most available standardized tests (both verbal and nonverbal) to the target

population, and in the absence of culturally differentiated norms for the various bilingual groups found in the United States.

Under the circumstances, the utilization of such inadequate measuring devices tends to be more deleterious than useful to both the school system and its student population. Many programs, therefore, resort either to the development of local norms based upon the identification of "problem" items in standardized tests, or to that of locally prepared pre-post evaluative devices based upon the school curriculum.

Whether standardized or local tests are used in bilingual education, a comprehensive model evaluation program includes the following:

1. Subject matter assessment, given in the language in which it is taught and, preferably, by the instructor who teaches it.

2. Language arts assessment in both languages (oral and written), preferably given by the instructor who teaches them.

3. History and cultural knowledge evaluation, given in the language in which it is taught and, preferably, by the instructor who teaches it.

4. Bilingual-bicultural skills evaluation in role-playing situations, verified by an impartial bicultural observer.

5. Human relations evaluation in daily classroom interaction, inferred by the classroom teacher on the basis of structured observation reports.

Misinformation and Problems in Bilingual Education

In many instances, the very real benefits of bilingual education to individuals who are members of a multi-ethnic society

(such as American society) have been overlooked as a result of misinformation born of ignorance, prejudice, or misguided governmental policies. In order to set the record straight on the nature of bilingual education, several of the major areas subject to common misunderstandings are listed below:

1. What Bilingual Education Is NOT

   a. Bilingual (rather than monolingual English) learning is NOT an un-American activity, but an alternative to educational failure for children with limited English knowledge.

   b. A bilingual program is NOT a watered down curriculum in which to "unload" non-English and partial bilingual speakers who do not "fit" into the regular classes; it simply parallels the academic program offered to other students qualitatively and quantitavely.

   c. A bilingual program is NOT a program strictly designed for Spanish speakers: it serves any language group whose children possess limited English ability.

   d. A bilingual program is NOT an ESL program, but one including an ESL component, as well as native language instruction.

   e. The ESL component in a bilingual program is NOT synonymous with "remedial English" or "remedial reading", but consists of a high specialized form of English instruction.

   f. The "history and culture" component in a bilingual program is NOT an expression of minority group militancy, nor is it a brain-washing program of forced assimilation, but instead an attempt to facilitate intergroup relations through knowledge and understanding.

2. What Unconscious Factors Undermine Bilingual Education

   a. The middle-class orientation of school administrators and teachers who expect non-English and partial bilingual learners to measure up to culturally irrelevant standards.

b. The alienation of bilingual parents and students from school values, which leads them to suspect educational policies, including those related to bilingual education.

c. The preconceived and erroneous notions of most American teachers and bilingual students about each other's motives and expectations.

d. The human tendency to misinterpret individual behaviors on the basis of cultural stereotypes.

e. The negative feelings associated with foreign accents and "foreign" ways.

f. The hidden resentment of second and third generation immigrants whose parents "made it" without "preferential" treatment.

3. What Negative Effects of Bilingual Education are Provided by Federal Funding

a. Bilingual education has become associated with "poverty" programs, rather than with "enrichment" programs.

b. Bilingual education has become synonymous with "compensatory", rather than with "quality" education.

c. Bilingual education has become interpreted as a "transitory" form of instruction, rather than a "maintenance" program leading to balanced bilingualism and biculturalism.

d. Bilingual education has become "suspect," as a possible form of segregation, rather than one of instructional individualization.

e. Bilingual education has become identified with "preferential" hiring practices (restricted to minority personnel), rather than with truly "equal" employment opportunity.

f. Bilingual education has become accepted as a costly educational experiment, rather than one of long-term economy (through the elimination of costly grade retention, remedial instruction, and drop-out prevention).

One last source of misinformation concerning bilingual instruction is derived from the very area which should provide unimpeachable data on the advantages, or disadvantages of this educational innovation--research. Except for the most recent investigations, study findings on the effects of bilingualism tend to be invalidated by their neglect of such meaningful variables as socio-economic status, ethnic background, sex, age,and the like. Unfortunately, the biases of such reports are seldom considered by those who point to the inconclusiveness of collected information and choose to overlook the statistical evidence of educational failure related to inadequacies in the "official" media of expression and instruction--the American English language.

On the plus side, however, the documentation now being gathered in this country as an outgrowth of bilingual programs points toward the establishment of reliable data, obtained under controlled conditions. A recent article, published in the October, 1973 issue of the Foreign Language Annals reveals that children who study a second language in elementary school develop a cognitive structure which is more diversified than that of monolingual pupils.[1] Under the circumstances, it would seem that the acquisition of bilingual skills at an early age may provide society with at least a partial

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[1] Richard G. Landry, "The Enhancement of Figural Creativity Through Second Language Learning at the Elementary School Level," Foreign Language Annals, Vol. VII, no. 1, October 1973, pp.111-115.

Appendix A

SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE

OF N.J.'s PUERTO RICANS

PUERTO RICAN CONGRESS OF NEW JERSEY, INC.
222 West State Street
Trenton, New Jersey 08608

Tel: (609) 989-8888

HECTOR S. RODRIGUEZ
Executive Director

1972

Demographic Characteristics of Puerto Ricans in New Jersey

The 1970 Census lists the following data about the Puerto Rican community in New Jersey:

- Puerto Rican families are larger, younger, are overwhelming renters of dwelling space, and live in overcrowded circumstances to a greater extent than is true of any other statistical group in New Jersey;

- median family income for Puerto Ricans is 44% less than the family income of Anglo-whites and 17% less than that of black people;

- per capita income for Puerto Ricans is 57% less than that of whites and 18% less than that of blacks;

- one out of every seven Puerto Rican families lives in extreme poverty; one out of every four families lives in poverty; one out of every three families is either impoverished or borderline poor; and seven out of every ten families are working poor;

- one out of every four Puerto Rican families is eligible for public assistance; whereas one out of every five families is receiving public assistance;

- 3.2% of employed Puerto Ricans are self-employed; whereas 4.2% of blacks and 10.8% of whites are self-employed;

- 8.1% of Puerto Ricans receive "other income" (interest, dividends, pensions, etc.); whereas 12.2% of blacks and 42.3% of whites are similarly situated:

-68% of employed Puerto Ricans work in low income-unskilled jobs;

- 24% of Puerto Rican mothers of pre-school children are working to supplement husband's income;

- 28% of Puerto Rican males 16 to 21 years old and out of school are unemployed;

- Puerto Ricans are dropping out of school at a rate four times that of whites and twice that of blacks;

- occupationally Puerto Ricans will require 120 years at the present growth rate (1.7% per decade) to achieve the present professional-managerial status realized by whites but only if the latter's occupational mobility stops in its tracks.

TABLE 1

Family Characteristics by Ethnicity (N.J.)

	PUERTO RICANS	BLACKS	WHITES
Mean size	4.3	4.0	3.5
% families with children under 6 years	50.3	34.7	24.3
% female headed	19.1	29.6	9.1
% in owner occupied housing unit	13.2	26.1	61.0
% live in overcrowded circumstances (1.01 or more persons per room)	28.0	20.0	16.0
% lacking some or all plumbing facilities	6.8	4.6	1.8

TABLE 2

Economic Characteristics by Ethnicity (N.J.)

	PUERTO RICANS	BLACKS	WHITES
Median family income	$6,459	$7,644	$11,771
Per capita income	$1,807	$2,243	$ 3,869
% family income less than poverty level	24.3	18.9	4.8
% families receiving public assistance	20.0	18.3	3.1
% family income less than 75 per cent of poverty level	13.7	11.6	3.1
% family income less than 125 per cent of poverty level	34.6	26.6	7.1

TABLE 3

Educational Characteristics by Ethnicity (N.J.)

	PUERTO RICANS	BLACKS	WHITES
Median school years completed	8.3	10.5	12.1
% males 16-21 years, school dropouts	46.2	25.7	11.6
% persons 18-24 years not completed High School	70.7	44.0	24.0
% persons 25 years +,			
less than 5 years education	23.4	8.9	4.3
less than 1 year High School	59.7	36.0	27.2
less than 4 years High School	79.6	63.8	45.9
college graduates	2.0	4.1	12.5

TABLE 4

Occupation of Employed Persons by Ethnicity (N.J.)

Occupation	% PUERTO RICANS '60 - '70	% BLACKS '70	% WHITES '70
1. Prof., tech., & kindred workers	2.7 - 4.2	8.3	16.7
2. Managers, adm. except farm	2.1 - 2.3	2.2	9.4
3. Sales and Clerical	7.7 - 13.2	18.3	28.9
4. Craftsmen	8.2 - 11.3	9.3	14.2
5. Operatives, laborers	62.1 - 55.2	38.9	20.6
6. Service Workers	10.1 - 11.1	22.1	9.5
7. Farmers and Agricultural workers	5.7 - 1.7	.9	.6*
or socio-economically:			
Middle Class: (#1 & 2)	4.8 - 6.5	10.5	26.7*
Strivers: (#3 & 4)	15.9 - 24.5	27.6	43.1
Working Poor: (#5,6,& 7)	77.9 - 68.0	61.9	30.1

*the .6% in category #7 for whites is included among the middle class as they are overwhelming farmers whereas for Puerto Ricans and Blacks they are overwhelming agricultural workers. It must be pointed out that category #7 does not include migrant farm-workers, day haul farmworkers who reside outside of New Jersey, and Puerto Rican contract workers.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census
P C (1) - C 32 New Jersey ('72)
P C (2) - 1 D ('68)